

Letters and Testimonials

PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

IN

BEHALF OF THE NOMINATION

OF

GEORGE W. BEARDSLEE

AS



COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS.

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LETTERS AND PETITIONS
FOR THE
NOMINATION AND CONFIRMATION
OF
GEORGE W. BEARDSLEE,
OF NEW YORK,
FOR THE
Vacant Office of Commissioner of Patents.

Letter from Vice-Admiral David D. Porter.

U. S. NAVAL ACADEMY,
Annapolis, Md., February 26, 1868.

The undersigned takes great pleasure in recommending Mr. GEORGE W. BEARDSLEE, of the City of New York, as a suitable person to fill the office of Commissioner of Patents.

This opinion is formed—first, from the certificates of the Hon. John K. Porter, an eminent lawyer of New York, Charles M. Keller and E. W. Stoughton, Esquires, both of whom are well known Patent lawyers, and have had large experience in Patent matters and the Patent Office; they are therefore competent to judge.

These gentlemen are personally known to me, and would not give a certificate unless it were justly due.

Mr. Beardslee is also known to me, having served in the North Atlantic Squadron under my command during the war as an electrician, in which capacity he rendered valuable service.

Mr. Beardslee possesses knowledge as an electrician connected with the Torpedo system, which it is very important this Government should secure.

A knowledge of his system, properly imparted to the Naval service, would enable us to render our harbor perfectly secure in time of war, and to drive all invaders from our coasts.

Mr. Beardslee has spent a great deal of money for the Government, and, in my opinion, has never received adequate remuneration.

From my own knowledge of him, and from the testimony of persons in whom I have confidence, I am satisfied that he would make a good appointee.

DAVID D. PORTER,
Vice-Admiral.

Letter from Hon. John K. Porter.

To His Excellency the

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES:

It gives me great pleasure to unite in recommending the appointment of George W. Beardslee, of the City of New York, as Commissioner of Patents.

Though not a lawyer by profession, he has an admirable legal mind, and a thorough practical acquaintance with every department of the Patent Law. I do not know any one in the country who unites so many qualifications for the position. He is a gentle-

man of unquestioned integrity, of great experience in practical affairs, of rare scientific attainments, of indomitable energy, and, more than all, of the clear and unerring judgment required in a position of grave responsibility. I have known Mr. Beardslee in professional and social relations for nearly twenty years, and do not hesitate therefore to speak of his qualifications with entire confidence.

Very respectfully yours,

JOHN K. PORTER.

Letter from the Hon. Edward Haight.

To His Excellency the

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES :

DEAR SIR: Having learned that my friend, George W. Beardslee, has been urged by his friends for the appointment to the vacant office of Commissioner of Patents, I beg to add my assurances of his capability and fitness for the office, and to express the hope that his application will receive your most favorable consideration, and result in his instalment to the office.

With the highest consideration,

I remain yours, very respectfully,

EDWARD HAIGHT.

Letter from Hon. A. B. Olin.

WASHINGTON, *March 4th*, 1868.

HON. O. H. BROWNING, *Secretary of the Interior* :

SIR: I take great pleasure in commending to your favorable notice and consideration Mr. Geo. W. Beardslee, who is an applicant for the vacant Commissioner-

ship of Patents. From my own knowledge, and from the representation of others, of Mr. Beardslee's qualifications for that position, I believe that he possesses, in an eminent degree, and probably in a greater degree than can be found in any one individual, the knowledge and attainments that that position requires. I take a very great personal interest in the matter, and hope it may meet your sanction and approval.

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

A. B. OLIN.

Letter from the Hon. Erastus Corning.

ALBANY, March 2d, 1868.

To His Excellency A. JOHNSON :

I am informed that Geo. W. Beardslee, Esq., is an applicant for the position of Commissioner of Patents.

I have known Mr. Beardslee for some years, and can, with great confidence, recommend him to your favorable consideration as a gentleman, in my judgment, eminently qualified by education and capacity for the position. I hope it may be quite consistent for you to give him the nomination.

I am, with great respect,

Your obedient servant,

ERASTUS CORNING.

Memorial from Chas. M. Keller, Esq., and others.

NEW YORK CITY, February 18, 1868.

To His Excellency the

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES :

The undersigned, citizens of the State of New York,

take pleasure in recommending Mr. George W. Beardslee, of the City of New York, as a person eminently suitable for the office of Commissioner of Patents.

The person called to that office should possess a thorough knowledge of the history and progress of the useful Arts, and a mind capable of discriminating between what are inventions, such as genius alone can create, and what are formal changes, such as mere skill can suggest; for, without such faculty of discrimination on the part of the incumbent of that important office, real inventors may fail to receive the protection contemplated by law, and the country will continue, as heretofore, to be flooded with thousands of patents for trifling modifications in the Arts, to the disparagement of real inventors, and especially to the inconveniences of all engaged in the Arts who are hampered in their industry by the claims of patentees of pretended inventions, and who find themselves in the alternative of paying tribute for the use of the most obvious suggestions of mere skill, or to be exposed to expensive and ruinous litigations.

To see that every real inventor shall be secured in the right of property for what he has created, and that every branch of industry shall be left free to use what mere skill can suggest, are the purposes for which that office was established. The want of the requisite qualifications in some of the persons who have held that office, has led to the practice of granting patents by the thousands for the most trivial modifications in every branch of the Arts.

The number, and not the quantity, of the patents seems to have become the rule.

The undersigned believes that Mr. Beardslee, from his general intelligence, integrity of character, experience as an inventor, and a practical knowledge of the past litigations under patents for important inventions, would fill the office of Commissioner of Patents with marked advantage to inventors and to the public at large; and, for the reasons stated, respectfully submit his name to the consideration of His Excellency the President of the United States.

(Signed)

CHAS. M. KELLER,

E. W. STOUGHTON,

H. H. VAN DYCK,

EDWARD HAIGHT,

WM. W. W. WOOD,

Chief Engineer U. S. Navy,

LEONARD W. JEROME.

To His Excellency the

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES:

We the undersigned, citizens of New York, and others, fully appreciating the importance of the position of the Commissioner of Patents, as identified with the progress of the mechanical and productive interests of the United States, the advancement of the mechanic arts, the development of agriculture, commerce, and industry, in view of the vacancy of Commissioner of Patents now existing, most respectfully call the attention of your Excellency, and to request your consideration for nomination as Commissioner of Patents, our fellow-citizen, Geo. W. Beardslee.

Mr. Beardslee has been largely identified with the mechanical and manufacturing interests of the country,

and is a gentleman of large and extended scientific attainments. His services to the country during the war embraced four years service at his own expense, with an expenditure of over fifty thousand dollars during its progress, for the benefit of the service.

Mr. Beardslee gave a son to the war, who was chief signal officer on General Terry's staff at the taking of Fort Fisher, and was one of the ten officers appointed to receive the parole of Johnson's Army.

The record of Mr. Beardslee is so well known to the country, and appreciated as a most competent and acceptable man for the position of Commissioner of Patents, we have no hesitation in asserting that his nomination to that office by the President would meet with the approval of the Senate, and prove acceptable to the country as a deserved and merited appointment.

WM. J. PEASE.

WM. P. BUCKMASTER.

Fulton Iron Works, New York.

SAM'L B. WHITE,

Cashier of Grocers' National Bank

CORN'S H. DELAMETER.

ERASTUS W. SMITH, A. P. D.

Constructing and Superintending Engines.

JOHN. ROACH,

Morgan Iron Works.

GEO. W. QUINTARD.

T. F. ROWLAND,

Continental Iron Works, Green Point, Brooklyn.

JAMES M. MOTLEY,

President Manhattan Oil Company.

GEO. E. WEEDE.

WASHINGTON CITY, D. C.,

February 29th, 1868.

To His Excellency the

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES:

In submitting to your Excellency the enclosed letters and memorials, praying for your favorable consideration of my name for the vacant office of Commissioner of Patents, I beg leave to make the following communication:

That, should this application receive your approbation, and result in the favor of my nomination, I feel quite confident that the Senate would not refuse confirmation.

My record in the late war will show that I devoted four years of my time for the good of the service, at my own expense, and that I made an additional expenditure of over fifty thousand dollars in the cause of the Government.

I am not in any way connected with any patent, by invention, or otherwise, except those valuable to the Government, and the character of which may be inferred from the enclosed copy of a letter from Vice-Admiral Porter; all of which improvements, discoveries, and secrets, I pledge myself, in the event of my nomination and confirmation, to make over to the Government.

I am not, in any way, directly or indirectly, identified with any patented interests of any kind, nor am I under any pledge or promise to any patented interests, except to secure to inventors their right of property in the creations of their own genius, and to serve the public and my country honestly and justly.

As a citizen of the State of New York, I beg leave to say that, in view of the population, wealth, and number of improvements in the arts, (they being much more numerous in that than in any other of the States,) it is deemed but an act of justice that that State should be represented in the person of the Commissioner of Patents—she never having had that honor but once, and then by a foreigner by birth and education.

All of which is most respectfully submitted for your Excellency's consideration by,

Your obedient servant,

GEORGE W. BEARDSLEE,

Washington, D. C.

*Letter from David D. Porter, Vice-Admiral U. S. Navy,
George W. Beardslee, of New York, relating to
torpedoes and torpedo operations, as practiced by Mr.
Beardslee at the Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md.*

U. S. NAVAL ACADEMY,

Annapolis, February 18th, 1868.

DEAR SIR: I beg leave to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, and it would be ungrateful in me, after your spending so much of your time in instructing us in the principles of your Torpedo system and Electric batteries, if I failed to thank you as you deserve to be thanked. I am sorry that I cannot express my gratitude in a more substantial form.

If, however, at any time, I can assist you in a professional way, I hope you will command my services. The practical information you have given to the instructing officer here, has been gratefully received, and

it was conveyed in such a manner that it will be a lasting benefit to the Academy, as I think any of the ordnance officers can now perform your experiments sufficiently well to enable them to operate against an enemy in the most effective manner.

Ever since the close of the rebellion, my mind has been continually fixed on the necessity of a Torpedo Corps in the Navy. I had some experience of the effective manner in which the rebels operated against our vessels, and indeed the only advantage they gained over our Navy was through their Torpedo Corps.

We had more vessels destroyed in this way than in any other, and with all the fearlessness displayed by our officers, they gradually learned to be cautious when operating against an enemy who practiced with such a terrible weapon as the torpedo.

When I hear persons discussing our chances in case of a war with Great Britain or France, my mind feels quite at rest regarding the defence of our coasts and harbors, although it sometimes misgives me when I think of the many sea-going vessels possessed by both the above named powers, and their ability to keep the sea without burning coal, and their offensive power in iron sea-going vessels against our wooden ones.

Our harbor defence is superior to theirs, as we have now and will still have more monitors with which we can prevent foreign vessels from entering our ports, and what we do not sink with our fifteen-inch guns we can destroy with torpedoes.

I have examined your system thoroughly, and am satisfied that it is not only the most perfect of any I have seen, but is susceptible of very little improve-

ment. With such an adjunct as yourself and your system of torpedoes and batteries, I would not hesitate to attempt to drive from our coast any force that could come here. Your battery can be successfully used on any small, fast, low-pressure tug, and for off-shore work on any tug of one hundred and fifty tons. This tug could approach the best iron ship of England or France at night, and blow her up when her crew were least expecting it.

We could improvise the most powerful fleet of torpedo vessels in a week; but, unless we have a corps of officers trained in the use of your system, they would not be effective.

I consider your time fuses for torpedoes the best that can be imagined, and I thank you for the confidence you have reposed in me of making me the guardian of the secret in case anything should happen to yourself.

It will be a most effective fuse used in a torpedo or shell that it may be desired to explode at a given time.

Having had you under my command during the rebellion, I am quite satisfied of your ability to undertake any adventure, which I am sure you would conduct with coolness and courage.

I trust that we may never be called upon to put your invention to the test against a foreign enemy; but if we do have a war, I feel satisfied that our coast would soon be cleared of blockaders.

Even our wooden war vessels, if they had speed, could approach an iron-clad at night, and destroy or seriously injure her before she could get a gun cast loose.

On the whole, I think we are fortunate in possessing the means of so annoying an enemy that should come on our coast, and it is to be hoped that your patriotism will prevent you from imparting your knowledge to any but your own Government. You may never be rewarded for your enterprise by your own Government, but you would inflict incalculable damage on us if you should let your invention fall into foreign hands.

I think your system is the best for blasting under water, because it is certain; and with an organized corps of naval officers, rocks and reefs in harbors could soon be cleared out of the way of commerce. In one week I would undertake to make Hell Gate and its approaches navigable for the largest vessels, and in one or two months any reef would certainly be removed.

Wishing you success in your undertakings,

I remain, very truly, yours,

DAVID D. PORTER,

Vice-Admiral U. S. Navy.

GEORGE W. BEARDSLEE, Esq.,

New York.

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